

**Board of Health Meeting**  
**Wednesday, January 5, 2011**

**Penn Room**

**Attendance:** E. Kimball, chair, K. Rearden, J. Reber, J. Wong

**Others Attending:** Tonya Butler, Legal Specialist

Ron Natale, PMI Supervisor

Maritza Loaiza, Secretary

Bob Miller, Reading Education Association & Reading School District

Lisa Ulsh, Lead Nurse for The Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program

Iwona Boraks, PA Department of Health, Maternal & Child Health Nursing Consultant

Dr. Kimball called the meeting to order at approximately 6pm.

**Approval of Minutes**

Dr. Kimball called the Board's attention to the agenda for this meeting and the minutes from the January 5<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**Mr. Reber moved, seconded by Ms. Rearden, to approve the February agenda and the January meeting minutes. The motion was approved unanimously.**

**Public Comment**

Mr. Bill Miller, of the Reading School District and the Reading Education Association, expressed his concern with the possible infestation of bed bugs within the schools, particularly Reading High School. He stated that he is concerned with students and staff exposure to bed bugs and then taking them home and exposing others at home. He added that he can only report on complaints of bed bugs in school buildings; he cannot substantiate the claims made.

Mr. Miller stated he is attending the Board of Health for more clarity on who to report issues such as these to and what assistance the City can be to the School District when handling issues like these to prevent further spread. Mr. Natale informed Mr. Miller that he can call the City's Customer Service Center and place a complaint along with the address. He added that the complaint will then be followed up by a Codes Inspector. Mr. Natale inquired where the address of the current concern is. Mr. Miller stated that he believes it was a sofa in Reading High School. Mr. Natale expressed that he heard about a complaint at two (2) area schools but wasn't sure on the details. Dr. Kimball asked Mr. Natale if the complaint was received today. Mr. Natale confirmed.

Mr. Natale and Mr. Miller agreed to exchange contact information and provide the Customer Service Center information.

Mr. Miller added the concern with students traveling often out of the area to places such as New York where problems with bed bugs have been reported.

Dr. Kimball stated that the bedbugs are a cause for concern. Dr. Wong described the bed bug wound and went on to explain the how the application of medication for itching alleviates itching but when the issue is not dealt with the biting continues. He explained that the problem occurs when the bitten starts scratching which can result in an infection.

Mr. Miller inquired how a bedbug bite could be identified. Dr. Wong stated that there is a pattern to their bite. He added that they tend to be found in upholstered furniture. Mr. Miller stated that most furniture in the high school is laminate. Dr. Wong added that sofas and/or school bags can be possible.

Ms. Iwona Burbaks from the PA Department of Health, requested contact information for Mr. Miller to forward educational material on bed bugs. Dr. Kimball also requested a follow up from Mr. Miller on the issue. Mr. Miller agreed.

### **Healthy Homes**

Ms. Boraks informed the Board that there is now a new Head of the Department of Health. Mr. Eli Avila has been chosen for the position. She added he has decided to focus the Healthy Homes program in Philadelphia, Erie, and Pittsburgh

Ms. Ulsh provided updated information on the current lead standings for the City. She reported the following:

- Four (4) new cases in December 2010
- 96 active cases (seven (7) years old and younger)
- 14 properties that need to be remediated and cleared

Dr. Kimball inquired how long have the properties been on this list. Ms. Ulsh stated that they are playing catch up as they had an original count of approximately 100 properties.

Ms. Rearden asked what the severity of the lead levels was. Ms. Ulsh states that they are below a level of ten (10).

Ms. Ulsh provided the Board with the following cities and their number of cases for comparison purposes:

- Harrisburg – 30
- Lancaster – 30
- Reading – 96

Mr. Natale informed the Board that the HUD lead grant deadline was not met for full grant eligibility but Mayor McMahon has applied and could be eligible for partial grant funds.

Ms. Rearden expressed a need for action when looking at the numbers provided.

Dr. Kimball requested a breakdown of levels over 20. She suggested a spreadsheet listing information about higher levels and ages. She also requested it to be broken down by zip codes to keep better track of areas of concern.

Dr. Wong inquired of the possible exposures. Ms. Ulsh stated that in most cases the lead is found in the paint used in the homes. She also explained her home inspection process.

Dr. Kimball expressed that she believes a lack of parental supervision is a cause of the great amount of children with lead exposure. She also noted that unfortunately a lot of migration of families can also increase exposure and difficulty with follow up.

Dr. Wong inquired how the numbers provided have been obtained. Ms. Boraks gave the example of Lancaster. She stated that they created a map of cases and pinpointed older buildings throughout the City and the result showed a correlation.

Mr. Natale explained how cleanliness is also related to the number of individuals exposed to lead

Dr. Wong suggested that an information packet about affordable remediation should be made. Ms. Boraks agreed. Ms. Ulsh added that paint is the most affordable way to get rid of lead exposure.

Dr. Wong inquired if parents are informed of the education/learning problems possible. Ms. Ulsh replied that they are and are referred to Early Intervention program. Ms. Boraks added that at levels of ten (10) or higher her agency gets involved with informational packets.

Dr. Kimball stated that informational packets need to include many pictures as parents that may not be able to read will respond better and pictures would be more effective.

Mr. Reber asked Mr. Natale what is done when visiting a property where a complaint is received. Mr. Natale replied that Pinnacle is informed and Ms. Ulsh tests the home for lead and she will provide an abatement report to Codes. Mr. Natale added that Ms. Ulsh is doing a fantastic job with this process.

Dr. Kimball inquired on the status of the Lead Program. Ms. Boraks stated that recently a meeting was held that included Mayor McMahon, Codes officials, Ms. Ulsh, the Interim Managing Director, Ms. Louise Sauders, and herself to discuss the program.

Dr. Kimball inquired what Ms. Ulsh job entails. Ms. Borak stated that Ms. Ulsh goes to WIC, Center, Head Starts, etc. to provide information on the initiative. Ms. Ulsh added that she holds a lead clinic once a month, as well as activities related to the Lead Mobile.

### **Health Officer's Report**

Ms. Loaiza informed the Board of the re-hiring of Dr. Hassel as Health Officer.

Ms. Rearden inquired if the practice of a clinic for employees going to continue. Mr. Natale replied that he is not fully aware of his full responsibilities. He stated that the minimal set of duties is what is listed in the ordinance.

The Board requested a copy of the Health Officer's duties/responsibilities. Ms. Loaiza stated that she would provide them before the next meeting.

Dr. Kimball stated her concern being that employee examinations are being done while working for the City. She expressed the risk related to this practice.

Dr. Wong stated that he should be required to attend the Board of Health Meetings. Mr. Natale informed the Board that per the ordinance either the Health Officer or a designee must attend.

### **Bernhart's Park**

Dr. Kimball informed the Board that the meeting with Exide and government officials and agencies was positive. She stated that the bottom line was that all parties agreed on the remediation level to be at 650ppm. She added that the only disagreement between Exide and all other parties involved was the requirement of insurance coverage by Exide in case of continued lead exposure at high levels.

Ms. Loaiza informed the Board that a summary of the meeting was provided for them in the agenda packets.

Dr. Kimball stated that the next meeting Bernhart-related will be on February 2, 2011 in City Clerk Linda Kelleher's office.

Dr. Wong inquired what changed Exide's resistance. Dr. Kimball replied that according to Mr. Love at Exide, finances changed, which allows them to move forward with the remediation.

Dr. Wong inquired how does the City follow-up to ensure they are abiding by the agreement. Dr. Kimball stated that levels at the park are dropping.

### **Elections**

Dr. Kimball inquired if the Board would like to have a secret ballot or open vote. The Board agreed on an open ballot.

Ms. Butler arrived at the meeting at this time.

The Board of Health's vote for chair was the following:

Dr. Kimball – Kimball, Rearden, Reber, Wong – 4

Ms. Butler announced that Dr. Kimball is re-elected as the chair of the Board of Health.

### **New Business**

#### **Grant Research**

Dr. Kimball inquired who handles grant information for the City. Mr. Natale stated that the Community Development Department. Dr. Kimball requested a report of information related to the Health grant and process of how they obtain or research grants for health-related issues from the CD Department.

Ms. Butler inquired if anyone on the Board would like to take on researching health-related grants. Dr. Kimball stated that this is a complicated process and no one on the Board is experienced enough to do so.

Mr. Natale exited the meeting at this time.

#### **City Emergency Plan**

Dr. Kimball inquired if all City Departments/offices have information pamphlets with the City Emergency Plans in them. Ms. Butler and Ms. Loaiza stated they would inquire and have the information available by the next meeting.

Dr. Kimball announced the next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 2<sup>nd</sup> at 6pm.

**Mr. Reber moved, seconded by Ms. Rearden, to adjourn the meeting.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:10 pm

*Respectfully submitted by Maritza Loaiza, Admin Assist to City Clerk*